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AUTHOR Ilika, Joseph
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INSTITUTION Lamar State Coll. of Technology, Beaumont, Tex. School of Education.
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ABSTRACT

The revised Hanriksen Teacher Word Analysis Test was administered to 133 education students to determine the relationship between certain reading methods courses completed and word analysis knowledge. The students were placed in one of four groups: (1) students without methods courses in reading and language arts, (2) students with 6 hours of methods courses, (3) students currently enrolled in 6 hours and student teaching, and (4) graduate students in English education. An analysis of variance of the groups resulted in a satistically significant F ratio and justified the rejection of the null hypothesis that there were no significant differences by extent of training groups. A systematic test between the means of the groups resulted in statistically significant differences at the .01 and .05 levels, favoring the students with 6 semester hours of methods courses. The small sample of seven graduate students had the highest mean scores, but their differences were not statistically significant. Students taking reading methods and student teaching at the same time did not achieve higher mean scores than the pre-student-teaching students who had 6 semester hours of reading methods courses. Tables and references are included. (Author/CM)

THE EXTENT OF TEACHER PREPARATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORD ANALYSIS KNOWLEGDE AMONG TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

Joseph Ilika

School of Education

Lamar State College of Technology

Beaumont, Texas

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Research by Shannon (1959), Farinella (1960), Gagon (1960), and Henriksen (1968) conclude that extent of college credits in reading methods courses is not related to an increased mastery of word analysis knowledge.

The purpose of this investigation is to re-examine the previous uncontested observation with 133 students enrolled in the School of Education at Lamar State College.

The revised Henriksen Teacher Word Analysis Test was administered to: (1) students without methods courses in reading and language arts, (2) students with six hours of methods courses, (3) students with six hours and student teaching. and (4) graduate students in English Education.

An analysis of variance of the groups resulted in a statistically significant F ratio and justified the rejection of the null hypothesis that there were no significant differences by extent of training groups.

RE002 448

A systematic test between the means of the groups resulted in statistically significant differences at the .01 and .05 level, favoring the students with six semester hours of methods courses. The small sample of seven graduate students had the highest mean scores but their differences were statistically not significant. Students taking reading methods and student teaching at the same time did not achieve higher mean scores than the pre-student teaching students who had six semester hours of reading methods courses.

The above results, and other unpublished findings, suggest that the extent of undergraduate professional preparation can influence a positive difference in teacher word analysis knowledge. These findings do not seem unreasonable in the light of the concerted efforts that have been extended by the teaching profession for self-improvement in the 1960's.

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Joseph Ilika

School of Education

Lamar State College of Technology

Beaumont, Texas

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the word attack knowledge of teacher trainees changes as the result of college instruction through methods of reading courses. This investigation is a progress report of a continuing series of investigations supported by the Lamar Research Council.

Research by Shannon (1959), Farinella (1960), and Henriksen (1968) suggests that methods of reading courses have not influenced the word attack knowledge of teachers.

Ilika's (1967) replication of Aaron's 1961 investigation of phonics generalizations resulted in higher mean test scores than a decade earlier. From these views of the research, a continuing need to investigate the efficacy of reading methods courses exists.

Dr. Emmaline Henriksen's Teacher Word Analysis Test was administered to 133 Lamar Tech School of Education students. Upon examination of the data, it was apparent that an observation of the efficacy of reading, language arts, student teaching, and graduate studies could be made.

RE002 448

A survey of the subjects revealed that extent of professional preparation fell into four groups: Group (1) did not have any related methods courses, N = 75. Group (2) had completed 3 semester hours of reading methods and 3 semester hours of language methods courses, N = 36. Group (3) had completed the 3 semester language arts method course and they were enrolled in the methods of reading and student teaching courses, N = 16. Group (4) was comprised of seven experienced teaching fellows in the graduate program in English Education, who had all of the preceding experiences in addition to the advantage of graduate studies.

The null hypothesis that there were no significant differences between the four groups at the various levels of professional preparation was taken and rejected on the results in Table 1 and 2.

RESULTS

The results in Table one revealed that there was a statistically significant F-ratio at the .05 level to indicate that the differences in variances were not due to chance alone.

TABLE 1

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF EXTENT OF PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION AND KNOWLEDGE OF WORD ANALYSIS

Source of Variation	d.f.	S.S.	M.S.	F-Ratio
Between	3	805.04	268.35	3.85*
Within	130	9055.99	69.66	
Total	133	9861.03		

TABLE 2

A COMPARISON OF MEAN WORD RECOGNITION TEST SCORES BY GROUPS REFLECTING EXTENT OF PROFESSIONAL COURSES RELATED TO MASTERY OF WORD RECOGNITION KNOWLEDGE

GROUPS	I Least N = 75 Mean = 68.45 S D = 8.41	II Two Courses N = 36 Mean = 72.97 S D = 8.36	III Two Courses and Student Teaching N = 16 Mean = 72.75 S D = 7.80	IV Most English Specialists N = 7 Mean = 75.71 S D = 9.60
I N = 75 Mean = 68.45 S D = 8.41		D = -4.52 S E D = 1.70 Z = 2.66**	D = -4.30 S E D = 2.17 Z = 1.97*	D = -7.26 S E D = 3.76 Z = 1.93
II N = 36 Mean = 72.97 S D = 8.36			D = 0.22 S E D = 2.40 Z = 0.09	D = -2.13 S E D = 3.89 Z = 0.55
III N = 16 Mean = 72.75 S D = 7.80				D = -2.35 S E D = 4.12 Z = 0.57

Table 2 portrays a systematic testing of the differences between the four group means. Groups (2) and (3), which had the most undergraduate training, attained two statistically significant differences at the .01 and .05 level of confidence in the comparisons with Group (1).

Group (4), with the benefit of graduate training, attained the highest mean score but none of their differences with the other groups were statistically significant, probably due to the small sample size.

The absence of statistically significant differences between Group (2) and Group (3) poses a current research dilema in that Shannon (1959) found no favorable advantage attributable to the influence of student teaching on the development of word analysis knowledge. On the other hand, Tyre (1968) found that tutoring type experience was associated with increased knowledge of word analysis. Further investigation of the influence of student teaching and word analysis knowledge is needed.

The results reveal that methods courses can be associated with a mastery of word analysis knowledge, contrary to the findings by Shannon (1959), Farinella (1960), and more recently by Henriksen (1968). The earlier findings suggest that growth in student knowledge of word analysis may vary with institutional standards, course content, and other factors, as Henriksen (1968) has observed.

In the case of Groups (2) and (3), the students had the structured exercises of a programed word analysis book for the teachers. Students also had access to recent research by Clymer, Bailey, Emons, Burmeister, and Winkley.

The positive findings of improvement in this report do not mitigate the findings of previous researchers. Instead, this investigation merely reemphasizes the need for extensive research in an area of teacher training and reading instruction that has scarcely been explored.

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